PRAYER TIME

Prayer Points for Prayer Time (5-6 minutes)
One prayer point for our church, our city, our country (2 minutes on each)

COMMUNION/LORD'S TABLE

BABY DEDICATION

FTV WELCOME

Welcome first-time visitors….
What we do announce is that if you are already part of a church that teaches the Word of God, we encourage you to remain faithful there. But if you are looking for a home church, we welcome you to visit us again and see if this is where God wants you to be planted.

LIVE STREAM AUDIENCE

Welcome! Please visit apcwo.org/ftv. Please Like, Share and Subscribe, if in Bangalore come to any one of our Sunday services. Please engage, post comments in the Live Chat during service.

SUNDAY VIDEO ANNOUNCEMENTS

DECLARATION

(Central: ---)

THIS IS GOD'S WORD.
THIS IS GOD SPEAKING TO ME.
I AM WHO GOD SAYS I AM. I CAN DO WHAT GOD SAYS I CAN DO
I WILL BECOME EVERYTHING GOD HAS PROMISED.
I AM SAVED, HEALED, DELIVERED, REDEEMED.
I AM BLESSED, VICTORIOUS, PROSPEROUS, TRIUMPHANT.
I AM A MINISTER OF GOD, A SERVANT OF CHRIST AND A CHANNEL OF HIS BLESSING TO MANY PEOPLE.
I RECEIVE HIS WORD I BELIEVE HIS WORD AND I LIVE BY HIS WORD.
CHRIST IS MY MASTER, TO HIM I AM IN ABSOLUTE SURRENDER.
IN JESUS NAME. AMEN.

BANNS OF MARRIAGE

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

TESTIMONY

Contend For The Faith Once Delivered To The Saints
December 31, 2023

RESPONSIBILITY OF PASTORAL/CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

As pastors one of areas of responsibility is to watch over the spiritual well-being of God people and to protect the people, the church community, and those in our sphere of influence from things that would cause harm to our faith in the Lord and His Word, or take us away from the purity, simplicity and originality of the faith God has given to us. We do not want a corrupted version of faith in Jesus Christ, but an authentic, pure, true to God, kind of faith.

The New Testament, in several places calls us as spiritual leaders to do this very thing. Let's look at a few examples.

Acts 20:26-32
26 Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men.
27 For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.
28 Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.
29 For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.
30 Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.
31 Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.
32 "So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

The apostle Paul is addressing the spiritual leaders (elders) from the church at Ephesus. Notice the seriousness of what he is communicating to them.

In essence, the apostle Paul took it on himself to speak "the full, entire, complete counsel of God". In other words, he shared everything. He didn't just emphasize one or two topics. So he states that his hands are clean.

Now he instructs the elders:

- Watch over your own lives (vs 28) – leaders should be careful not to get deceived or led astray.
- Watch over the flock (vs 28) – God has made you overseers, to shepherd them. God has purchased them with a great price, His own blood.

- Savage wolves will come (vs 29-30) – People will come from within the church, like wolves going after sheep. These wolves come in sheep's clothing. They will draw disciples (committed believers) after themselves.
- Solution (vs 32) – we must be committed to God and to His Word. This is how we will be able to withstand the work of savage wolves – people who try to harm, destroy, divert and draw people away from the faith.

Paul expresses the same concern in his epistle to the Ephesians:

Ephesians 4:13-15
13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;
14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,
15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—

Paul again refers to people who through trickery, cunning, and deceit, will introduce doctrine – teaching and ideas – the will cause believers to be tossed to and fro aimlessly, like the waves of the sea. The antidote is to focus on growing into becoming more like Jesus in all things, in all areas.

Today, we want to focus on the epistle of Jude. Our sermon title is taken from this chapter.

Jude, a half-brother of Jesus Christ, natural full-brother of James (Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3). James later became the leader of the church in Jerusalem. Jude is addressing all believers.

Jude 1
1 Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ:
2 Mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.
3 Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

While Jude wanted to write about "our common salvation", the Holy Spirit put it on his heart to write to the believers instructing them specifically to "contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints". There is a struggle, a contending involved, to hold to the faith which was given once to the saints (the original, authentic, pure faith).

Jude then explains why this is necessary for us:

4 For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

This is what Jude warns us about: ungodly people who corrupt the purity of what has been given to us.

This echoes what the apostle Paul had warned about people who would draw believers away after themselves, using deceit, cunning and trickery to cause people to waver and wander away.

5 But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.
6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;
7 as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

Paul warns us that there will be serious consequences if we wander away from the faith – the truth that was delivered to us. He points to the people who did not enter the promised land, but died in the wilderness, the angels who did not stay in their proper place, and to the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

8 Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries.
9 Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"
10 But these speak evil of whatever they do not know; and whatever they know naturally, like brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves.
11 Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.
12 These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves. They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots;
13 raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.
14 Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints,
15 to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

16 These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage.
17 But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ:
18 how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts.
19 These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit.
20 But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,
21 keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.
22 And on some have compassion, making a distinction;
23 but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.
24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,
25 To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen.

THE CONCERN

The concern that we have presented to us both by the apostle Paul and Jude is the work and influence of ungodly people who corrupt the purity of what has been given to us. It is about people who would draw believers away after themselves, using deceit, cunning and trickery to cause people to waver and wander away from the faith that was once delivered to the saints.

THE MARKS OF PEOPLE TO AVOID

Jude describes these people who we have to beware of and guard against in order to "contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints". These are the characteristics of such people:

- they live to indulge fleshy (ungodly) desires - pride, power, etc.
- they reject authority.
- they speak evil of dignitaries (those in civil and spiritual authority).
- these speak evil of whatever they do not know.
- they corrupt themselves.
- the way of Cain – instead of correcting his wrong, he killed his innocent and righteous brother Abel out of jealousy.
- the error of Balaam for profit - selling spiritual gifts for profit.
- the rebellion of Korah - stepping into a spiritual office and anointing they do not have.

- they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves - the profit off you to serve their own agendas.
- they are clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars - in other words they do not produce anything good, but stir up chaos, confusion, making a lot of noise and effect, but bring no real benefit.
- they are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage.
- the Lord Jesus is coming to judge such people.

THE INSTRUCTIONS

In view of such possibilities, Jude instructs believers to take the following action:

Vs 3: Contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. Hold on tenaciously to the purity, authenticity, and originality of the faith that we have been given. Refuse to allow anything to corrupt what we have.
Vs 20: Building yourselves up – keep growing strong spiritually praying in the Holy Spirit.
Vs 21: Keep yourselves in the love of God – stay in love. Do not give hate any place in your heart.
Vs 22: Be compassionate on some, discern. Be compassionate towards those who may be in doubt. There will be people who may be momentarily swayed by such influences. In love get them back.
Vs 23: Rescue those who are living in danger of hell's fire. Make every attempt to rescue people from straying away and heading to hell's fire. Watch out for those who are straying from the authentic faith we were given, and get them back.

CONTEND EARNESTLY FOR THE FAITH

We must contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

Four actions:

KEEP OUR FAITH AND THE CHURCH FREE FROM DEAD RELIGION

Sometimes people want to enforce a certain form, rituals, a form of godliness without the power of the Spirit, legalism, control, and manipulation, etc. We need to keep pursuing the fresh work and move of the Spirit in similar expressions as we see in the book of Acts.

KEEP OUR FAITH AND THE CHURCH FREE FROM COMPROMISE

No compromise of godly Biblical standards in lifestyle.
No compromise in standards of holiness live free from worldliness.
We engage with the world without being compromised by the world.

KEEP OUR FAITH AND THE CHURCH FREE FROM POLITICS

Politics – taking sides of one against the other to promote selfish agendas.
There are two variations of this that we wish to mention.
I, Politics within the church – of people taking sides with spiritual leaders and promoting, fighting, bickering with one another.

2, Politics as referring to those who are seeking position in civil government – the pulpit is not a place to promote political parties or individual candidates. People (believers) must be allowed to make their own choice. A pastor should not stand up in the pulpit to promote a particular political party or political agenda or political candidate. We are to be salt and light in the world. Hence, believers should take their place in government and be salt and light bringing Kingdom influence through righteous lifestyle, excellence, and godly wisdom. But we do not allow politics to enter into the church community dividing us.

A, Consider how Jesus engaged the political order of his day?

- He taught us to honor authority, pay taxes, etc. Give to God what is God's and to Ceasar what is Ceasar's.
- He was not intimidated by religious leaders (pharisees, sadducees) or political leaders (king Herod, Pilate).
- While Jesus did have people who had access to power support His ministry, He did not use that access for personal agenda. Example: Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward supported Jesus financially (Luke 8:3).

Jesus did not take sides, either with the Jewish king Herod or the Roman leadership.

B, How the Early Church engaged the political order of their day?

We can see in the book of Acts the Early Church followed the example of Jesus in relating to government.

C, Don't forget Church history.

One example of what happens when we try to merge "church and state" :
Constantine the Great (reigned 306-337) of the Byzantine Empire (324-1453): Constantine was the first Roman emperor to embrace Christianity and played a crucial role in the establishment of Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul) as the new capital of the Roman Empire. His reign marked the beginning of the Byzantine Empire. The Byzantine Empire, the continuation of the Eastern Roman Empire, was closely tied to the Eastern Orthodox Church. The emperor held both political and religious authority, and the church played a significant role in shaping state policies. The emperor was considered the head of the Church, and religious and political authorities were intertwined. **The outcome:** The Church declined spiritually into what we call the dark ages, one thousand years of spiritual darkness.

KEEP OUR FAITH AND THE CHURCH FREE FROM HATE

2 Timothy 3:1-5
1 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come:
2 For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,
3 unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good,
4 traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,
5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

This is what Paul said, by the Spirit, would be the attitude of people in the last days. No love.

Ephesians 3
15 but, speaking the truth in love,…

We uphold and proclaim truth in love and fairness to all people.

We must walk in love. We uphold Biblical truth, but we do not do it with hate and violence. We do it with love, kindness, and fairness. We follow the example of our heavenly Father who make the sun to shine on the good and the bad, and the rain to fall on the good and the bad (Matthew 5:44-45).

EXAMINE YOURSELVES

2 Corinthians 13:5
Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.

THE CONFIDENCE

Jude 1:24-25
24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,
25 To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen.

As we follow the instructions Jude provided, He assures us of the work God will do in and for us. He will keep us from stumbling and bring us into His own presence faultless.

Keep our faith and the church free from dead religion.
Keep our faith and the church free from compromise.

Keep our faith and the church free from politics.
Keep our faith and the church free from hate.
The confidence

GOSPEL AND SALVATION CALL

SUPERNATURAL MINISTRY TIME

Minister as the Spirit leads

USEFUL RESOURCES

Watch our online Sunday Church service live stream every Sunday at 10:30am (Indian Time, GMT+5:30). Spirit filled, anointed worship, Word and ministry for healing, miracles, and deliverance.
YOUTUBE: https://youtube.com/allpeopleschurchbangalore
WEBSITE: https://apcwo.org/live

Our other websites and free resources:
CHURCH: https://apcwo.org
FREE SERMONS: https://apcwo.org/resources/sermons
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SERMON OUTLINE

As pastors one of areas of responsibility is to watch over the spiritual well-being of God people and to protect the people, the church community, and those in our sphere of influence from things that would cause harm to our faith in the Lord and His Word, or take us away from the purity, simplicity and originality of the faith God has given to us. We do not want a corrupted version of faith in Jesus Christ, but an authentic, pure, true to God, kind of faith. The concern that is presented in Scripture is the work and influence of ungodly people who corrupt the purity of what has been given to us. It is about people who would draw believers away after themselves, using deceit, cunning and trickery to cause people to waver and wander away from the faith that was once delivered to the saints. This Sermon brings our attention to Jude chapter

I. Here, Jude describes these people who we must beware of and guard against in order to "contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints". We also examine the instructions believers are to follow in view of influences from such people. We also bring our attention to some action we can take as believers today to "contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints": Keep our faith and the church free from dead religion. Keep our faith and the church free from compromise. Keep our faith and the church free from politics. Keep our faith and the church free from hate.

KEYWORDS

Contend earnestly for the faith, faith without politics, faith without compromise, faith without hate, sermon, sermons, sermon notes, sermon outline, free sermon notes, free sermon outlines, Bible study resources

REFERENCES/CITATIONS

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